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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted in 1974 to determine how professional, technical, and managerial males obtain the information that leads to getting a job. Data were gathered by selecting a random sample of 457 men in Newton, Massachusetts, who had changed jobs within the previous 5 years. Personal interviews were conducted with 100 men and 182 mailed surveys were returned. Personal contact was found to be the predominant method of finding out about jobs, and jobs found by personal contact often were of better quality and paid better than jobs found by more formal means (such as answering help-wanted advertisements). Structural factors were found to be the strongest influence on what information about jobs was received through personal contacts. (Structural factors mean the properties of one's social situation that shape his contact network.) The study also found that long tenure in a job tended to cut down the number of contacts and thus make finding a new job harder. Optimum time for job tenure appeared to be 3-5 years, with optimum managerial tenure longer. The study created models to demonstrate the methods of finding jobs and what influenced the number and quality of contacts job-changers had. (An afterword for the second edition provides a review of research in the 20 years since the original study. It contains 126 references. Four appendixes include the following: (1) design and conduct of the study; (2) coding rules and problems; (3) letters and interview schedules; and (4) an article on economic action and social structure--the problem of embeddedness. Contains 68 references. A list of 112 references from the first edition is included.) (KC)

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